

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

February 7, 2013

Governor Chris Christie
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Christie:

Thank you for your efforts to help our citizens recover in the wake of Superstorm Sandy. For thousands of New Jerseyans, the hardships they face as they recover from this disaster are exacerbated because they lack access to affordable health care. As our state continues to recover from this terrible storm and you consider New Jersey's budget for the coming year, we ask you to commit to fully expand New Jersey's Medicaid program under the Affordable Care Act.

As you know, the Affordable Care Act, passed by Congress and signed by President Obama in 2010, will provide New Jerseyans with access to affordable, quality insurance. Nationally, this law will add 30 million people to the ranks of the insured while helping to reduce increases in health care costs. Expanding Medicaid in 2014 is a cornerstone of this law, giving low income, childless adults in states like New Jersey access to health insurance. In our state alone, an estimated 300,000 people, 28 percent of those currently without insurance, are slated to gain access to Medicaid under the health reform law.

In expanding Medicaid, Congress and the President recognized the burden that rising health care costs are placing on state budgets. New Jersey currently receives roughly half of the funding it needs to pay for those enrolled in its Medicaid program from the federal government and must pay the remainder of the cost from state funds. However, under the health reform law, the federal government will cover 100 percent of the cost of expanding Medicaid to newly eligible adults, including many low-income parents who the state is already covering under its FamilyCare program, for the first three years. After 2017, the federal government will cover at least 90 percent of the costs of this population covered by the Medicaid expansion. Expanding Medicaid is a great deal for New Jersey, bringing in an estimated \$11 billion in federal funding to help cover New Jerseyans most in need of quality health care.

Additionally, expanding Medicaid will help to reduce increases in the cost of health care for New Jersey citizens. New Jerseyans are forced to pay more in insurance premiums and taxpayer reimbursements to hospitals because uninsured individuals must delay care or use emergency services. In 2011, New Jersey hospitals spent approximately \$1.35 billion on charity care, and New Jersey taxpayers reimbursed hospitals \$337.5 million to help cover those costs. Each year, New Jersey families pay \$1,000 more on their health insurance premiums as the cost of unpaid medical bills gets passed along to insured consumers.

A bipartisan group of governors across the country has committed to expanding Medicaid in their states, and, like these leaders, our state has a strong tradition of working across the aisle

in the best interests of New Jerseyans. Just as our state has pulled together to rebuild after Sandy, Governor Christine Whitman worked with Democrats in the legislature to create NJ FamilyCare, ensuring low-income children and their parents had access to quality, affordable health care. We urge you to do what is in the best interest of thousands of people in New Jersey and continue a tradition of bipartisan support for Medicaid by fully expanding New Jersey's Medicaid program.

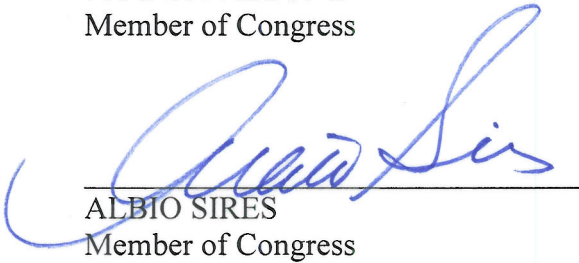
Sincerely,

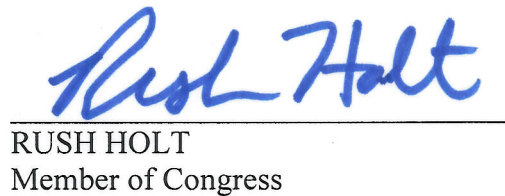

FRANK R. LAUTENBERG
United States Senator


ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator


FRANK PALLONE
Member of Congress


BILL PASCRELL
Member of Congress


ALBIO SIRES
Member of Congress


RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress


DONALD PAYNE JR.
Member of Congress


ROBERT ANDREWS
Member of Congress